



ORANGE BEACH FIRE RESCUE

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RE: Fire Hydrant Inspection, Testing and Maintenance

To Whom it May Concern:

Fire hydrants are a necessary component for fire protection and the ability of fire departments to be able to effectively manage fires. There are two distinct types of fire hydrants: public hydrants and private hydrants. As a property manager or owner's representative, it is important to know the differences and responsibilities of the owner for inspection, testing, and maintenance purposes.

PUBLIC HYDRANTS

City hydrants are those that are on public property and the Orange Beach Water Authority (OBWA) is responsible for maintaining the hydrants. They are going to be the most common as they are seen along public streets and property, positioned to allow the fire department to access them easily.

PRIVATE HYDRANTS

Private hydrants are those that are on private property, which are owned and maintained by the owner. Private fire hydrants are required by the International Fire Code to supply the necessary water supply for fire protection. Private fire hydrants are installed when the distance between the building or property and the closest public fire hydrant is too far for the fire department to access to battle a fire.

INSPECTION, TESTING, & MAINTENANCE (ITM) OF PRIVATE FIRE HYDRANTS

Below are the requirements of NFPA 25 Standard for Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems. Private fire hydrants shall be flow tested annually to clear any foreign material from the private service main. This is done because occasionally rocks or other foreign material can get into the fire line and cause blockages. It also allows the ITM vendor to identify any potential problems before it gets worse. Chapter 7 in NFPA 25 covers private fire service mains and the inspection, testing and maintenance of private fire hydrants. The items below are an overview and not a comprehensive list of everything that should be completed.

INSPECTION

- Inspect annually and after each operation
- Exposed piping shall be inspected annually
- Underground piping should be inspected per 7.2.2.2

TESTING

- Hydrants shall be flowed annually
- Each hydrant shall be opened fully and water flowed until all foreign material has cleared and flow shall be maintained for no less than 1 minute
- After operation, dry barrel and wall hydrants shall be observed for proper drainage from the barrel and should take no longer than 60 minutes to fully drain
- Exposed and underground piping shall be flow tested at a minimum of 5-year intervals

MAINTENANCE

- Hydrants shall be lubricated annually to ensure that all stems, caps, plugs, and threads are in proper operating condition
- Hydrants shall be kept free of any growth or debris and protected against mechanical damage so that free access is ensured

Please contact our office if you have any questions or concerns.

City of Orange Beach Fire Marshal
(251) 981-6616